

# **SLUPERFUND**

## **Fact Sheet**

### **COMMENCEMENT BAY NEARSHORE/TIDEFLATS**

*Tacoma, Washington*



**U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REGION 10**

**December 1998**

## **Hylebos Waterway**

### **EPA invites your comments on a new Hylebos Cleanup Committee Report**

The Hylebos Cleanup Committee (HCC) has prepared an Evaluation Report which summarizes prior studies and presents the Hylebos Cleanup Committee's preferred remediation plan for Hylebos Waterway. The plan identifies potential natural recovery areas, dredging areas, capping areas (see map page 3), as well as a list of promising sediment disposal sites.

Sediment remedial design studies in the Hylebos Waterway continue under a 1994 Administrative Order on Consent between EPA and the HCC. The Hylebos Waterway pre-remedial design work has included:

- Compilation of existing data
- Sampling and analysis to determine the nature and extent of chemicals in sediment
- Assessment of sediment toxicity
- Analysis of natural recovery
- Preliminary assessment of habitats impacted by the cleanup
- Evaluation of the potential for sediment recontamination once the remedy is implemented
- Recommendation of a preferred remediation plan

The data and findings of the studies have been presented to EPA in seven reports, the last of which is the Pre-Remedial Design Evaluation Report, which is now available for public review and comment.

## **Background**

The Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats (CB/NT) Superfund site is located on the eastern shore of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington. It was added to the National Priorities List in 1983 following environmental studies that indicated areas of hazardous chemicals in the sediments. These areas are being addressed by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of Washington Department of Ecology, because clean sediments are important to a healthy marine environment.

The EPA determined that a combination of upland source control, sediment confinement, natural recovery, site use restrictions, and monitoring are the most appropriate remedies for achieving the CB/NT cleanup objectives. The remedy selected incorporates four options for confinement of sediments: in-place capping, confined aquatic disposal, nearshore disposal, and upland disposal. The choice of confinement option ultimately applied to a sediment problem area is to be made in the pre-remedial design phase, and is to be based on the status of available remedial technologies evaluated during pre-remedial design, the availability of disposal sites, and economic and development considerations.

Source control and monitoring will continue until EPA and Ecology determine that all major sources have been controlled to the extent that sediment recontamination is not predicted to occur, or the source is in compliance with all known, available, and reasonable methods of treatment.

## **Read this Issue for Updates On ...**

- ° Hylebos Waterway
  - The Hylebos Wood Debris Group's Cleanup Action Plan
  - Cleanup at the Occidental Chemical Site
  - Removal Action at General Metals of Tacoma
- ° Thea Foss Waterway
- ° Middle Waterway
- ° Asarco Sediments



### ***Comment Period***

EPA is reviewing the HCC Evaluation Report and would like your comments. The report is available for your review at the information repositories listed at the end of this fact sheet. **Please submit any comments you may have to Allison Hiltner, EPA Project Manager, 1200 Sixth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101, or e-mail: [hiltner.allison@epamail.epa.gov](mailto:hiltner.allison@epamail.epa.gov) by January 15, 1999.**

For more information, please contact **Allison Hiltner**, EPA Project Manager, at **(206) 553-2140**.

### ***The Hylebos Wood Debris Group's Cleanup Action Plan***

The Wood Debris Group (Manke Lumber, Louisiana Pacific, and Weyerhaeuser) is performing an investigation and cleanup of wood debris in the upper turning basin under Ecology's Sediment Management Authority. The Cleanup Action Plan for wood debris will be available for public review and comment this spring.

For more information, please contact **Russ McMillan**, Ecology Project Manager, at **(360)407-6254**, or by e-mail: [rmcm461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:rmcm461@ecy.wa.gov).

### ***Hylebos Property Owners' Meeting***

On December 16th, the Hylebos Cleanup Committee gave property owners a summary of current conditions in the waterway and an overview of the their proposed cleanup plan. Ecology also gave a presentation of work being done by the Wood Debris Group, which is a group of companies working with Ecology to clean up wood debris in the head of the Hylebos. If you would like a copy of the handouts from this meeting, please contact **Jeanne O'Dell**, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, at **(206) 553-6919**.

### ***Cleanup at the Occidental Chemical Site***

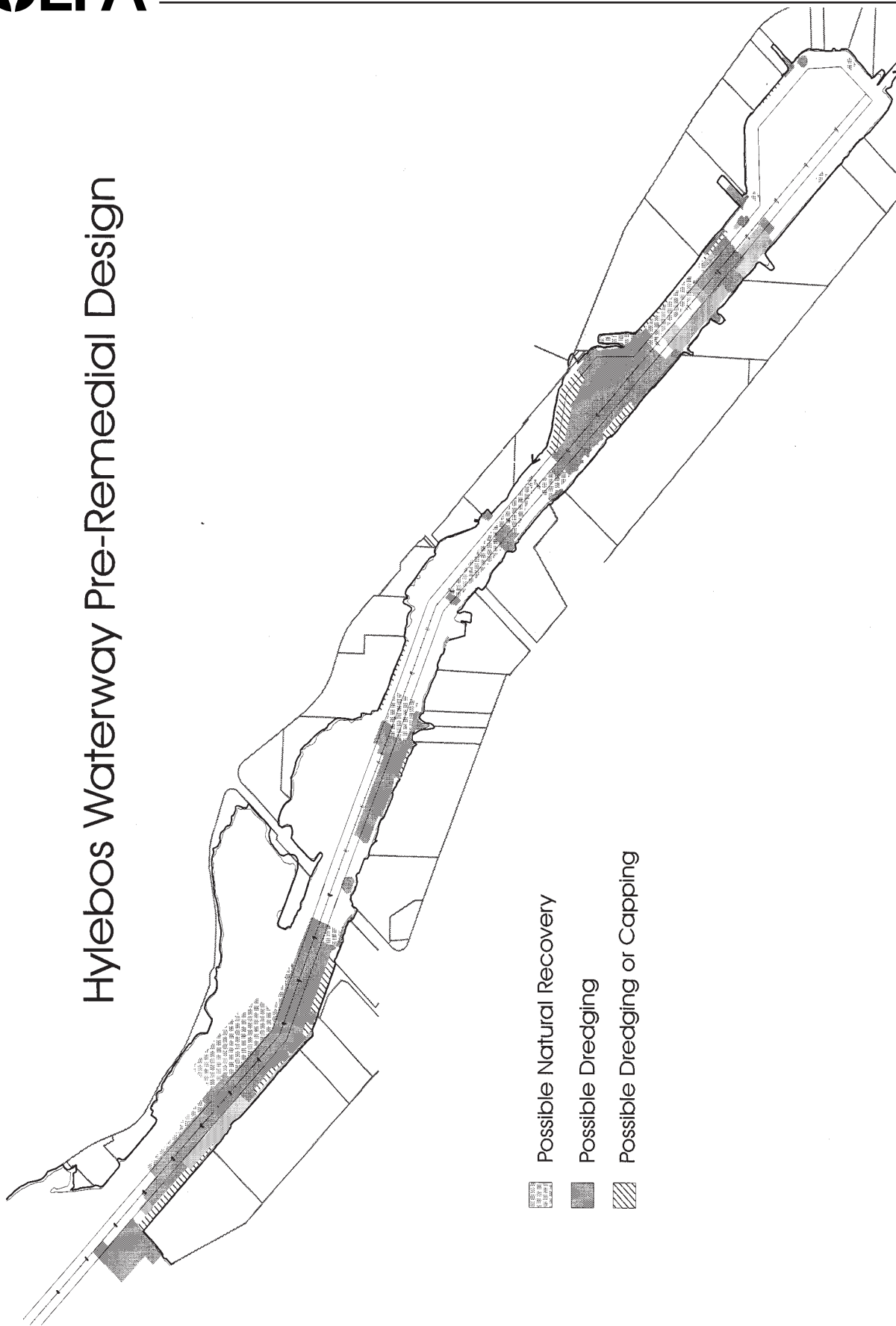
At the Occidental Chemical site, located adjacent to the waterway near the mouth of the Hylebos, cleanup efforts will focus on two areas: 1) the Embankment Area (the bank extending from the waterway inland about 100 feet), and 2) Area 5106 (an area of subtidal contamination extending approximately 100 feet into the water from low tide).

The Embankment Area is composed of fill and man-made debris and sampling in 1996 revealed the need for cleanup action of some type along this area. Occidental Chemical is currently evaluating the quality of groundwater near the surface of the embankment. Sampling results will be used for the analysis of cleanup design alternatives, which will be presented in a report this spring. Cleanup of the Embankment will likely occur after cleanup of Area 5106 to prevent potential recontamination of the bank from subtidal cleanup activities (potential dredging).

Area 5106 subtidal sediments were sampled and were found to be heavily contaminated with chlorinated organics. Occidental Chemical, EPA, and the Corps of Engineers are currently evaluating the potential water quality impacts from dredging subtidal sediments contaminated with high levels of organics. These efforts will help determine if dredging is a viable option as a potential component of the cleanup action. A report of cleanup design alternatives for Area 5106 should be finalized by fall of 1999, followed by the cleanup of the site.

For more information, please contact **Ken Marcy**, EPA Project Manager, at **(206) 553-2782**.

# Hylebos Waterway Pre-Remedial Design





### ***Removal Action at General Metals of Tacoma***

Schnitzer Steel Industries, Inc. conducted an early cleanup action at General Metals of Tacoma in conjunction with construction of a new wharf and bulkhead at the same location. Under an Administrative Order on Consent signed on October 13, 1998, Schnitzer Steel began cap construction on approximately 500 feet of shoreline contaminated with PCBs and PAHs from the base of a bulkhead to 35 feet below low tide level. The cap construction was completed on November 27, 1998. This cleanup is part of the overall Hylebos Waterway cleanup.

For more information, please contact **Allison Hiltner**, EPA Project Manager, at **(206) 553-2140**.

### **Thea Foss Waterway**

Last summer, the City of Tacoma submitted to EPA a major report in which it identified areas in Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood waterways for dredging and capping. The report also recommended St. Paul Waterway as the location for the disposal of the dredged contaminated sediments from the waterways.

EPA, the state, and other federal agencies reviewed the report and the recommendations for cleanup and disposal and provided comments to the City in September 1998. EPA identified a number of issues that needed resolution before EPA could recommend a remedy and request public review. The issues EPA identified include: 1) concerns about the actual capacity of the St. Paul Waterway to contain the volume of sediments that need disposal; 2) technical demonstration that if contaminated sediments are placed in St. Paul Waterway they would not migrate to the surrounding environment; 3) increase in the amount of habitat mitigation so that it will comply with Endangered Species Act; and 4) documentation that all practicable means have

been taken to control sources to the waterways as much as feasible.

The City is currently working to address these issues before it submits a revised report to EPA. Concurrently, EPA is working with the Natural Resource Trustees and the Potentially Responsible Parties to determine whether an agreement can be reached on an adequate level of habitat mitigation to compensate for the impacts from the St. Paul fill. EPA anticipates that these issues will be resolved during the winter of 1999 and that it will recommend a preferred remedy and request public comment in the spring of 1999.

For more information, please contact **Christine Psyk**, EPA Project Manager, at **(206) 553-1748**.

### **Olympic View Restoration Area**

The Olympic View Restoration Area is at the end of the peninsula between Thea Foss and Middle Waterways. Samples collected previously by the City of Tacoma, and reported to EPA this past spring, showed elevated dioxin levels in sediments. The City has agreed to conduct further sampling to determine the extent of dioxin and other contaminants in the area and has submitted a sampling plan to EPA. The sampling plan is nearing approval and sampling should take place this winter.

For more information, please contact **Elly Hale**, EPA Project Manager, at **(206) 553-1215**.

### **Middle Waterway**

Results of sampling in the waterway completed this spring have been presented to EPA in a draft report. Consistent with previous sampling efforts, widespread mercury was confirmed, and in some areas PAHs were detected. Some possible source areas were identified based on bank sediment contamination. EPA and the Middle Waterway Action Committee are discussing data gaps to be filled in the second round of sampling. The Middle Waterway





Action Committee and EPA are also coordinating with the City on the planned restoration work near the head of the waterway and the potential of combining disposal sites.

For more information, please contact **Elly Hale**, EPA Project Manager, at **(206) 553-1215**.

### **Asarco Sediments**

Asarco continues investigating the offshore sediments under an EPA Consent Order. The agreement required the installation and monitoring of a pilot cap just offshore from the site. Additional studies are being conducted to learn more about the overall effectiveness of the pilot cap. A groundwater/sediments task force is looking at impacts, if any, that groundwater discharge could have to offshore sediments and the sediment cap. The work of the task force will provide critical information that can be used in assessing cleanup alternatives for the contaminated sediments.

For more information, please contact **Lee Marshall**, EPA Project Manager, at **(206) 553-2723**.

### **Information Repositories**

Written information and technical documents are available for review at the following locations:

#### **In Tacoma:**

Main Tacoma Public Library  
1102 Tacoma Avenue South  
Northwest Room

Citizens for a Healthy Bay  
771 Broadway  
(206) 383-2429

Please call for an appointment, if information is needed after business hours.

#### **In Seattle:**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
7th Floor Records Center

#### **Additional information for specific Asarco related projects is available at the following locations:**

Ruston Town Hall  
5117 North Winnifred  
Ruston, WA

Asarco Information Center  
5311 North Commercial  
Tacoma, WA  
(206) 756-5436

Please call for an appointment, if information is needed after business hours.

Washington Department of Ecology  
300 Desmond Drive SE  
Lacey, WA

### For More Information

Contact the representatives listed in this fact sheet or one of the following representatives. **All EPA representatives can be reached on our toll free number at 1-800-424-4372.**

**Jeanne O'Dell**, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, Seattle -  
**(206) 553-6919**

**Dawne Chapman**, Ecology Public Involvement, Lacey -  
**(360) 407-7233**

To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by contacting one of the EPA representatives.

### Internet Information

Fact sheets for the Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats Superfund site are available at the following Internet address - **<http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/offices/oec/cercla.html>**.

For more information about EPA Region 10's web site, please contact **Beth Kunz** at **(206) 553-2592**.



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***SUPERFUND FACT SHEET***  
***COMMENCEMENT BAY NEARSHORE/TIDEFLATS***  
***Tacoma, Washington***